

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of procuring a component, comprising the steps of:

establishing at least one bid criterion for said component;

establishing a first bid request corresponding to said at least one bid criterion;

identifying at least one potential supplier for said component;

submitting said bid request to said at least one potential supplier;

receiving a bid response from at least one of said at least one potential supplier;

comparing said bid response with said at least one bid criterion;

determining that said bid response is undesirable based on said comparison;

modifying said at least one bid criterion for said component in response to said bid response being undesirable, the modifying including:

breaking down the component into a plurality of subcomponents; and

determining at least one modified bid criterion for at least one of the plurality of subcomponents;

establishing a second, modified bid request using the at least one modified bid criterion for the at least one of the plurality of subcomponents;

identifying at least one second potential supplier;

submitting said second bid request to said at least one second potential supplier;

receiving a second bid response from at least one of said at least one second potential supplier; and

selecting at least one of said at least one second potential supplier based on said second bid response.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein said plurality of bid criteria includes a cost associated with at least one of said subcomponents.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of establishing said second bid request includes the step of requesting a purchase of at least one of said plurality of subcomponents.

6. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 5, further comprising the steps of:

assembling said plurality of subcomponents to form said component; and  
assembling a system based on said component.

7. (Previously Presented) A computer based method of procuring a component, comprising the steps of:

establishing at least one bid criterion for a component;

establishing a bid request corresponding to said at least one bid criterion;

posting said bid request on a web site;

receiving at least one bid response from at least one potential supplier;

subsequent to receiving at least one satisfactory bid response, selecting at least one of said at least one potential supplier to supply said component;

subsequent to receiving no satisfactory bid responses, substituting at least one alternative bid criterion for said at least one bid criterion for said component, the substituting including:

breaking down the component into a plurality of subcomponents; and

determining at least one modified bid criterion for at least one of the plurality of subcomponents; and

establishing an alternative bid request using the at least one modified bid criterion for the at least one of the plurality of subcomponents.

8. (Original) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 7, wherein said bid request is an open bid request.

9. (Previously Presented) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 7, further comprising, subsequent to receiving no satisfactory bid responses, the step of submitting said alternative bid request to at least one alternative potential suppliers.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Withdrawn) A method of procuring at least one component associated with a custom system, comprising the steps of:

establishing a custom system design, said design including a plurality of components;

establishing a bid criteria for at least one of said plurality of components;

establishing a bid request in response to said bid criteria;

identifying at least one potential supplier for said at least one of said plurality of components;

submitting said bid request to said at least one potential supplier;

receiving a bid response from at least one of said potential supplier;

comparing said bid response with said bid criteria;

modifying said bid criteria in response to said modified bid response being an undesirable bid;

establishing a second bid request in response to said modified bid criteria;

establishing at least one second potential supplier;

submitting said second bid request to said at least one second potential suppliers;

receiving a second bid response from at least one of said second potential supplier; and

selecting one of said second potential suppliers to supply said component, in response to said second bid response.

12. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of establishing said second bid request includes the step of requesting fabrication of at least one of said plurality of subcomponents.

13. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of establishing said second bid request includes the step of requesting assembly of at least two of said plurality of subcomponents to form said component.

14. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one modified bid criterion includes a design associated with at least one of said subcomponents.

15. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one modified bid criterion includes a function associated with at least one of said subcomponents.

16. (Previously Presented) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 9, further comprising the step of posting said alternative bid request on a web site.

17. (Previously Presented) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 9, further comprising, subsequent to receiving no satisfactory bid responses, the step of receiving at least one bid response from said alternative potential suppliers.

18. (Previously Presented) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 17, further comprising, subsequent to receiving no satisfactory bid responses, the step of selecting at least one of said alternative potential suppliers to supply said subcomponents.

19. (Previously Presented) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 18, further comprising, subsequent to receiving no satisfactory bid responses, the step of procuring said component from said selected at least one supplier selected from among the alternative potential suppliers.

20. (Previously Presented) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 9, wherein said alternative bid request relates to a cost of each of said subcomponents and at least one of a design and a function associated with said subcomponents.

21. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 3, wherein said cost included in said plurality of bid criteria includes a fabrication cost and a part cost associated with at least one of said subcomponents.

22. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 21, further comprising the steps of accepting only one of the fabrication cost and the part cost associated with at least one of said subcomponents and rejecting the other one of the fabrication cost and the part cost associated with the at least one of said subcomponents.

23. (New) A computer based method, as set forth in claim 9, wherein said alternative bid request relates to a cost of each of said subcomponents, at least one of said cost of each of said subcomponents including a fabrication cost and a part cost, and further comprising the step of accepting only one of the fabrication cost and the part cost associated with at least one of said subcomponents and rejecting the other one of the fabrication cost and the part cost associated with the at least one of said subcomponents.